THE MAYORS' INSTITUTE ON

CITY DESIGN

National Endowment for the Arts/United States Conference of Mayors/American Architectural Foundation Summer 1999

Masterplan Puts Cincinnati in Fast Lane

For Mayor Roxanne Qualls, a pivotal moment came while she was attending the Mayors' Institute on City Design (MICD 20) in the spring of 1996. After laying out the City's plans for the redevelopment of its waterfront in a carefully planned presentation, the message she heard was, "This is too big! There's too much going on! You'll never be able to get a handle on it all!" The number of projects was, indeed, staggering.

The City was preparing to replace its dual-use Riverfront Stadium with two new facilities, one designed specially for the Bengals and one for the Reds. Plans were being developed to repair an historically significant bridge over the Ohio River, which connects downtown Cincinnati to Covington, KY, and to make major improvements in a major arterial highway that separates downtown from the waterfront. Proposals were also being considered for a museum, an aquarium, and various residential, commercial and entertainment

Cincinnati Mayor Roxanne Qualls

development projects. This was all included in a major investment study leading up to a long-term strategic plan that would take 20 years to complete, although the process had yet to be defined.

Upon returning home from the Mayors' Institute, Mayor Qualls began immediately to act on the advice she had received. She began by setting up a steering committee to take responsibility for the selection and hiring of an urban design firm to develop a masterplan for the downtown riverfront that would direct future policy. Before the end of the year the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, working together, had hired Urban Design Associates (UDA) of Pittsburgh. A key directive was to find a way to reconnect the city to the river.

In the city's early years, the river was the front door to the down town. Water-dependent commerce, including shipping and industry, had always been vitally important. As these activities declined, however, the city began to turn its back on the river. In the 50s, an expressway was built that divided the downtown from the waterfront. Along with a naturally occurring change in elevation, the expressway effectively cut off the waterfront from the rest of downtown.

In the early 90s, owners of two of the city's sports franchises became dissatisfied with the stadium they shared. Designed for both baseball and football, Riverfront stadium did not work well for either. Both the Reds and the Bengals began to demand new stadiums comparable to

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Design Conference Features MICD Alumni

Mayor John Norquist (MICD 13, 1992) was host and master of ceremonies when the Congress for New Urbanism (CNU) met in Milwaukee in June. The CNU is a nonprofit organization whose members include designers, planners, economists, developers, and government officials. The organization convenes annually to discuss issues affecting the design and livability of cities and the design principles of New Urbanism.

Norquist has been an active participant in these congresses since the first one in 1993, and currently serves on the organization's Board of Directors.

At the opening session, the cities of several MICD alumni were recognized with the Catherine Brown Award. This newly created award honors the late Catherine Brown, who with her husband and partner Bill Morrish, directed the Center for the American Urban Landscape at the University of Minnesota and established the first regional Mayors' Institute, MICD: Midwest, in 1989. The Award recognizes design excellence in the urban landscape, with particular emphasis on community involvement.

Sharing in the award were the cities of Orlando (Mayor Glenda Hood, MICD 15, 1993) for the City's masterplan for the redevelopment of the Orlando Naval Training Center, and St. Louis (Mayor Clarence Harmon, MICD 24, 1998) for its masterplan for the revitalization of Forest Park. The City of Milwaukee received an honorable mention for it's River Walk, which has promoted activity throughout a 15 block area of downtown Milwaukee.

A plenary session on the third day

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(Cincinnati, continued from page 1)

those being built in other cities. Noting the need for improvements to the historic Roebling Bridge, prototype for the Brooklyn Bridge, and to roads in the area, city leaders began to think about ways in which all of these important elements were connected.

In a referendum, voters approved a sales tax for two new stadiums and transportation infrastructure in and around the downtown area. Directed to get the community involved in the design process, UDA coordinated a series of design workshops, or charrettes, focusing on the various elements. Citizens and stake-holders worked with UDA to identify key principles that would guide the design process. These principles included extending the street grid to it's original pattern, placing large structures toward the periphery of the development area to preserve views of the river; extending parks along the river's edge to maintain public access; and to use structured parking to raise development out of the floodplain. Once these principles were determined, they formed the basis for all future decisions, as described by Paul Ostergaard, AIA, Principal of UDA. "When the owners wanted to build one of the stadiums in the middle of the site, we were able to refer back to the guiding principles and justify why it needed to be located further west."

Transportation was a critical element. Streets within the redevelopment area needed to be improved and linked back to the existing downtown grid. The expressway built during the 50s, Ft. Washington Way, had been rated 'F' for safety by the Ohio DOT. According to city architect Robert Richardson, AIA, "our goal was to reduce the width of the road and the number of dangerous merge areas while increasing traffic capacity." While this would seem to be impossible, Richardson and Qualls, were confident a solution could be found.

Richardson describes the result, "There will be two grade-level boulevards, with five lanes each way, for local traffic. During non-peak hours, parking will be allowed along outside lanes. Below grade will be express lanes for through traffic, built to Federal standards, with four lanes each way. Five bridges will extend the downtown streets across the express lanes and link the local lanes with both the waterfront and the downtown grid. These improvements will double the capacity while increasing the safety rating to a level B." Designer Ostergaard asserts that the highway improvements are "absolutely key to future development on the waterfront".

What is most surprising is the dramatic change between expectation and reality. The original goal was to have a plan established by 2000. As a result of collaboration and a well-managed design process, the project will have gone from planning to funding to building by 2000. The demands of team owners helped speed things along. Without the pressure of a year 2000 deadline for the Bengals stadium, the Ohio and Kentucky transportation agencies might have dragged out the highway improvements for 15-20 years. But with this work well underway, progress on the rest of the plan is advancing quickly.

A notable aspect of the highway improvements is the commitment made

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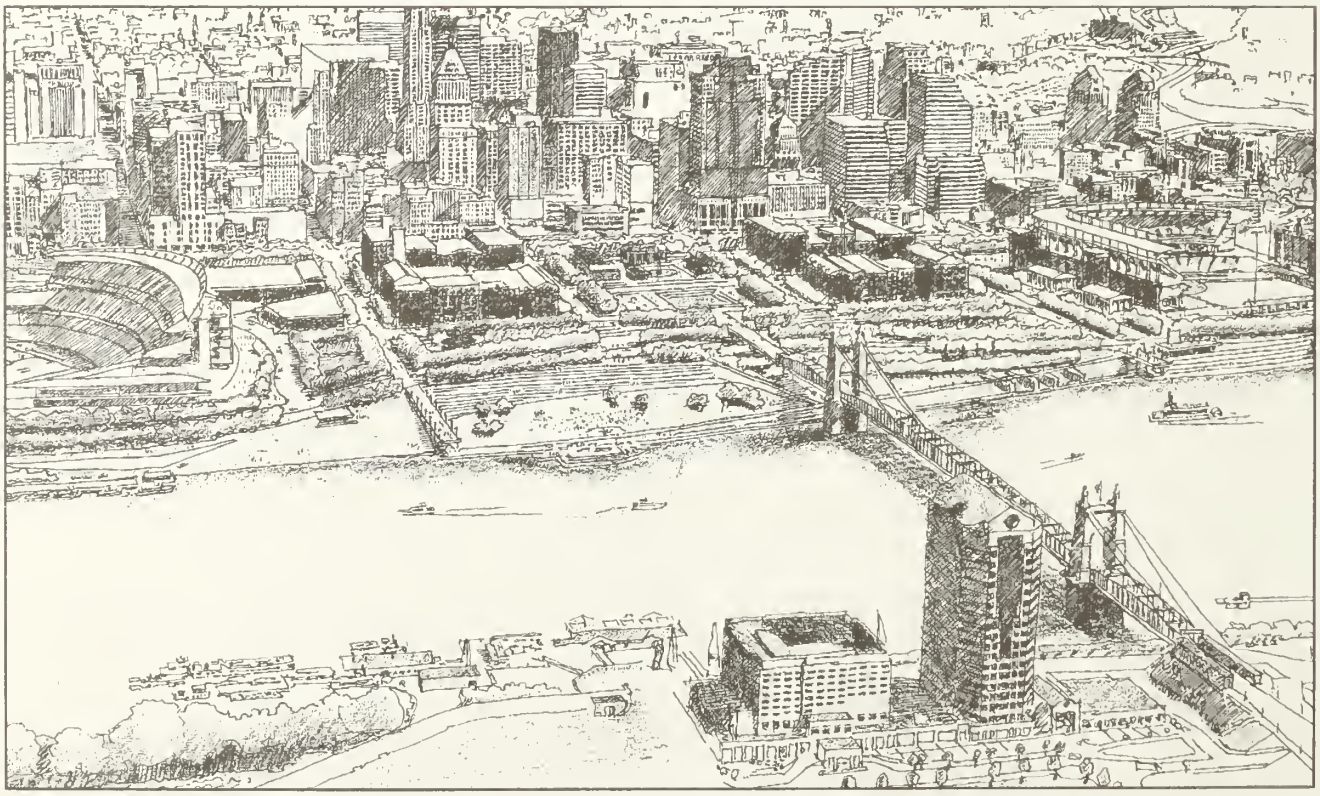

Central Riverfront Urban Design and Stadium Siting Concept Illustration by UDA

MICD: XXV
April 1999

Charlottesville, Virginia

RESOURCE TEAM

William Hudnut, III (Chair)
former mayor of Indianapolis

Craig Barton
architect & educator

Richard Collins, Ph.D., AICP
planner, negotiator & educator

Dana Crawford
urban housing developer

Roberta Brandes Gratz, Hon. AIA
urbanist, author

Judith Kinnard, AIA
architect & educator

Robert Peck, Hon. AIA
federal buildings administrator

Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr., Hon. AIA
Charleston, SC (keynote)

Walter Hood
landscape architect & educator

Michael J. Stanton, FAIA
architect & AIA President

MAYORS AND DESIGN ISSUES

Mayor Sara Bost, Irvington, NJ: The Irvington Center Transit Project will serve as the city's transportation hub and important downtown anchor. How can the project provide improved pedestrian safety and access to parking?

Mayor Paul Fraim, Norfolk, VA: The City is working to improve linkages between various downtown activity centers, but the design of busy Waterside Drive continues to hinder pedestrian traffic between downtown and the waterfront. How can the City foster improved connections in this area?

Mayor Pro Tem Tom Lutz, Santa Ana, CA: Revitalization of an area of downtown as an Artists' District is hindered by poor pedestrian connections between the District and other downtown activity centers. How can these connections be improved?

Mayor Carol Marinovich, Kansas City, KS: Redevelopment plans for the City's eastern downtown gateway could form the foundation for the revitalization of all of downtown. What type of development and design guidelines should be sought?

Mayor David Moore, Beaumont, TX: The development of the Crockett Street Entertainment District and relocation of a railroad switching yard is aimed at bringing a critical mass downtown with access to the riverfront. How can the city advance revitalization efforts and encourage investors?

Mayor George Spadoro, Edison, NJ: The city is working with a developer to create a town center for a city with no traditional downtown. How can the city work with the private sector to create a public place that is also a successful development project?

Mayor John Robert Smith, Meridian, MS: An arts and entertainment education and conference center is planned for a block of historic buildings downtown. What design and strategies should be used to support diverse activities in a complex of buildings?

MICD: Midwest
February 1999

University of Cincinnati

Cincinnati, Ohio

RESOURCE TEAM

Maurice Cox
architect & educator

Elizabeth Deakin
transportation planner & educator

Ed Freer, ASLA
landscape architect

Peter Katz
urbanist/author

Cheryl O'Neil
urban designer/planner

Mayor Roxanne Qualls
Cincinnati, OH

Brenda Case Scheer, AICP
planner & educator

Kiril Stanilov, Ph.D.
urban designer & educator

William Taylor, AIA
architect & educator

Anne Vernez-Moudon, Ph.D.
urban designer & educator

Don Zuchelli
economist

MAYORS AND DESIGN ISSUES

Mayor David Berger, Lima, OH: A mixed use development and preservation project is planned in an area of downtown that has recently lost a block of historic buildings for parking. How can the city effectively introduce adaptive reuse of existing structures?

Mayor Paul Jadin, Green Bay, WI: The Fox River redevelopment project is designed to reclaim the river as a major city asset. How should the city maintain the integrity of the "main street" principles in this area?

Mayor Jean Harris, Ph.D., Eden Prairie, MN: Creation of a downtown center is planned. How should the city link the area to the shopping center and what design elements should be included?

Mayor Darwin Hindman, Columbia, MO: Trail Head Park is planned to provide green space in the downtown area and will connect regional waterways to the downtown. What is the best way to interconnect the greenspace across main streets and how can it be appropriately integrated?

Mayor Timothy Seider, Greenfield, WI: Reconfiguration of the 76th Street commercial corridor is planned to be pedestrian oriented and to link users to the mall, a park and surrounding retail. What design elements will best achieve this goal?

Mayor Chuck Tooley, Billings, MT: An urban entertainment center in downtown is planned. Where is the best location and what is the best mix of uses and physical configuration for the area?

Mayor Joan Wagnon, Topeka, KS: A new housing district north of the capitol will help to create a twenty-four hour city? What should the city's role be and what incentives would be most attractive to developers?

MICD: Southwest February 1999

Arizona State University

Tempe, Arizona

RESOURCE TEAM

Mario Campos
landscape architect

Nan Ellin, Ph.D.
architect & educator

Mary Kihl
planner & educator

Ron McCoy
architect & educator

Sedgwick Mead
urban developer

Charles Royer
former mayor & urban lecturer

Ignacio San Martin
urban designer & educator

Michael Underhill, AIA
architect & educator

Max Underwood
architect & educator

MAYORS AND DESIGN ISSUES

Mayor William Arnold, Goodyear, AZ: Shaping the city center into a vibrant district is the city's goal. What type of businesses should the city attract and what incentives should be given to them?

Mayor Lewis K. Billings, Provo, UT: An inter-modal transportation center will expand the current Amtrak station site. What types of uses will complement this area and where does the city find a developer who is capable and willing to get involved? The city is experiencing conflicts between the need for affordable housing for university students and the need to maintain the quality and integrity of the historical neighborhood adjacent to the campus. How can a city meet both sets of needs?

Mayor Pat Cronenberger, Littleton, CO: The impact of a new light rail system on downtown will affect parking and may have an impact on the small town character. What design criteria should be used and where should the parking garage be located?

Mayor Paul Daly, Prescott, AZ: The planned location of a regional mall adjacent to an upscale neighborhood has generated significant concerns from residents? How should the city proceed with the project and gain support from local residents?

Mayor Paul E. Tauer, Aurora, CO: The Fitzsimons Army Medical Center closure is planned for re-use which will affect the boundary area. How can the boundary area be successfully connected to the project?

Mayor Elaine M. Skruggs, Glendale, AZ: Overcoming challenges to an expanding downtown is a goal of the city. How can cross promotion be generated between two retail areas and how could light rail be included?

MICD: South February 1999

Tulane University

New Orleans, Louisiana

RESOURCE TEAM

David Collins, AIA
architect

Michael Dobbins, FAIA, AICP
architect & planner

Nancy Fleming
landscape architect

Patricia Gay
historic preservationist

Michael Kelly, AICP, APA
architect & planner

Ralph Lerner
architect & educator

Grover Mouton, III
urban planner & artist

Mark Robbins
architect & artist

MAYORS AND DESIGN ISSUES

Mayor Doc Eldridge, Athens, GA: A new hotel is planned to be compatible with the existing historic fabric and the new community center. How can the development serve to reconstitute the heart of the central business district and create a link to the University?

Mayor Bob Young, Augusta, GA: Reuse of a large, blighted residential area is underway. What kind of strategic planning effort should be implemented and how can the area be made part of the existing city context?

Mayor A.J. Holloway, Biloxi, MS: A gaming belt and the historic downtown is booming and parking has become limited. How can the city attract visitors from the casinos to the downtown and provide adequate parking?

Mayor Bruce Grady, Ft. Myers, FL: A convention center and hotel expansion is planned. How should the facility address the streets and riverfront and how can adequate access be assured?

Mayor Abe Pierce, III: Establishing an agenda to find adaptive reuse for the entire downtown. What should be the major components of a new land-use for the downtown and how should the process for decisions me made?

Mayor William May, Jr., Frankfurt, KY: Two Squares are separated by an enclosed shopping mall with one major pedestrian entrance. How can the city connect these elements along with a river restoration in a pedestrian friendly way?

Mayor Doug Echols, Rock Hill, SC: The city is facilitating a public planning process to define and prioritize the communities expectations for a street enhancement project. What are possible design elements that will establish a pedestrian base in the corridor?

Mayor Jack Cavanagh, Winston-Salem, NC: The city plans to revitalize the old courthouse square. What should be the desired design guidelines for new development and what kind of land-use would be best?

(Cincinnati, continued from page 2)

to design enhancements, including five new bridges that will allow the street grid of the city to extend over the highway. Fifteen percent of funding has been set aside for improved sidewalks, lighting, retaining walls and landscaping. These elements are being designed by Chan Krieger & Associates along with Hargreaves Associates. Alex Krieger, FAIA, chaired the resource team at the institute session Mayor Qualls attended.

Another important element is the Freedom Center, a museum dedicated to the Underground Railroad and set to open in 2003. Mayor Qualls recognizes the need for a mix of uses in the area in order to attract residents and visitors for more than just the length of an afternoon ball game. She also recognizes that criteria for creating that mix must be more than just financial. "People have to realize that it's okay not to get the same level of return on the residential portion of development as the commercial."

When the MICD: Northeast met recently at the University of Cincinnati, Qualls described the City's efforts to a group of fellow mayors. "Once completed, our city will have the most magnificent, sustainable, and diverse mix of uses and public space perhaps anywhere in the country." Alex Krieger, who has continued to advise the mayor since she came to the institute, has been impressed with her ability to use the project to accomplish other goals. He recommends others to "Try to find opportunities when a catalytic project begins. Ask yourself, 'What other public good could be achieved?' and then insist that through the project, the city's goals are advanced."

Robert Richardson also believes Cincinnati's progress can serve as a model. He cites the City's effort to interweave the transportation elements with city life, to create areas that are unique rather than cookie cutter, and to build on community assets such as the Freedom Center. Above all, he encourages cities to "Think big with an overall vision. Nothing is too big to undertake."

Paul Ostergaard attributes the project's success to public involvement, starting with the charrettes. "This has been a great experience because Cincinnati is actually building. What they're doing is amazing. Cincinnati used the design process to build consensus and build a framework for development." He credits the mayor's leadership in articulating a vision for the community to rally around. States Qualls, "I think everyone can agree that well-designed public space is an asset to any community. ★

Catherine Brown 1951-1998

(Catherine Brown Award, continued from page 1)

featured a Mayors' Panel on Leadership in Revitalizing Cities, moderated by journalist and author Ray Suarez. Participating mayors included Glenda Hood, Roxanne Qualls, Susan Savage of Tulsa (MICD 17, 1994), Bret Schundler of Jersey City, and John Norquist. Ann Azari, former mayor of Fort Collins (MICD 19, 1995) participated later in the afternoon in a breakout session on New Urbanism and the Political Process. ★

Special Session on School Design Planned

The National Endowment for the Arts recently approved funding for a special session of the Mayors' Institute on City Design that will explore the benefits of school design as part of urban revitalization.

This proposed additional session will extend invitations to mayors to bring specific school-related issues to the table. The intention is to identify some of the ways in which schools can operate as catalysts for community redevelopment. The session will include discussions of case studies involving historical schools in downtown centers, school reuse in suburban settings, the design of new school buildings, and schools as community anchors. Specialized resource people with experience in the design of educational facilities in the context of American downtowns will contribute their expertise. A publication will document several of the case studies that could be models of implementation for communities across the country. This special session will be hosted by the College of Art and Architecture and the City Design Center at the University of Illinois/Chicago Circle.

Mayors interested in presenting school-related issues are encouraged to send a letter of interest to Christine Saum, MICD executive director, 1620 I Street NW, Third Floor, Washington, DC 20006-4005. ★

CITY DESIGN

The Mayors' Institute on City Design newsletter.

The Mayors' Institute on City Design is an initiative established by the National Endowment for the Arts and administered through a partnership with The United States Conference of Mayors and the American Architectural Foundation. The Mayors' Institute is dedicated to improving the design and livability of America's cities.

To learn more about the work of the Institute, please visit our web site at www.micd.org or contact MICD Executive Director, Christine Saum or Program Coordinator, Gina Cooper at The Mayors' Institute on City Design, 1620 I Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006-4005 phone: (202) 463-1390 E-mail: micdinfo@micd.org.

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C A L E N D A R

October 6-8, 1999
MICD 26; Charlottesville, Virginia

April 26-28, 2000
MICD 27

MICD: Midwest
November 18-20, Cincinnati, OH

MICD: Northeast
December 9-11, Cambridge, MA

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ALUMNI NOTES

Parade's April 25, 1999, edition featured a cover story on Chattanooga, TN, *The Reborn American City*, featuring **Mayor Jon Kinsey** (MICD: South, 1999). The article listed four other cities *that are making it happen* including Charleston, SC, (**Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr., Hon. AIA,** MICD 1, 1986 and Cofounder); Portland, OR; Baltimore, MD, (**Mayor Kurt Schmoke** MICD 4, 1988); and Boston, MA.

★

The USCM, the Large Urban County Caucus of the National Association of Counties and the National Community Development Association jointly announced the recipients of this year's National Community Development Innovation awards. Included were cities led by three Institute alumni: **Mayor Deedee Corradini** (MICD 21, 1996), **Mayor Patrick Henry Hays**, North Little Rock, AR (MICD: South 1995) and **Mayor Sara Bost**, Irvington, NJ (MICD 25, 1999).

★

The National Civic League selected finalists for the All-America City Award. Included are four communities with mayors who are MICD alumni. They are Scottsdale, AZ (**Mayor Sam Campana**, MICD 22, 1997), Stockton, CA (**Mayor Gary Podesto**, MICD 24, 1998), Lancaster, PA (**Mayor Charlie Smithgall** (MICD: Northeast, 1998) and Greater Green Bay (**Mayor Paul Jadin**, Midwest, 1999).

★

The Village of Arlington Heights, IL (**Mayor Arlene Mulder**, MICD: Midwest, 1995) was chosen as the winner of the 1999 Burnham Award for excellence in planning from the Metropolitan Planning Council. This award commends the Village for its long-range vision and successful planning and implementation of housing, retail, and transit-oriented projects for the downtown area.

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The 20th Annual City Livability Awards were announced at the 67th Annual Conference of Mayors on June 14 in New Orleans. The 20 City Livability Awards were presented in two population categories - ten awards for cities of fewer than 100,000 people, and ten Awards for cities of 100,000 or more inhabitants. For small cities, honorable mention went to alumni city Arlington Heights, IL (**Mayor Arlene Mulder**, MICD: Midwest, 1995); San Rafael, CA (Albert Boro, MICD: West 1993) Waterloo, IA (**Mayor John Rooff, III**, Midwest 1994). Outstanding Achievement Award for the Most Livable City for small cities went to Lynn, MA (**Mayor Patrick McManus**, MICD 24, 1998). Larger cities that won honorable mention were Denver, CO (**Mayor Wellington Webb**, MICD 19, 1995), New Haven, CT (**Mayor John DeStefano Jr.**, MICD 16, 1994), Stamford, CT (Mayor Dannel Malloy, MICD 24, 1998); Bridgeport, CT (**Mayor Joseph Ganim**, MICD 13, 1992); and Toledo, OH (**Mayor Carty Finkbeiner**, MICD 18- 1995). Two cities tied for the Outstanding Achievement award for large cities, they were Akron, OH (**Mayor Donald Plusquellic**, MICD 21, 1996); and Fort Wayne, IN (**Mayor Paul Helmke**, MICD 9, 1990).

★

The Department of Transportation announced that 35 proposals totaling $13.1 million will receive funding under an initiative called the Transportation and Community and System Preservation Pilot program (TCSP).

Alumni cities who will receive grants include: Anchorage, AK (**Mayor Rick Mystrom**, MICD 20, 1996), Tempe, AZ (**Mayor Neil Giuliano** (MICD: West 1995), Hartford, CT (**Mayor Mike Peters**, MICD 17, 1994), Ada/Canyon Counties with Boise, ID (**Mayor Brent Coles**, MICD: West 1994), Kansas City, MO (**Mayor Emanuel Cleaver**, II, (MICD 19, 1995) and Charleston, SC (**Mayor Joseph P. Riley, Jr.**, Hon. AIA, MICD 1, 1986).

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